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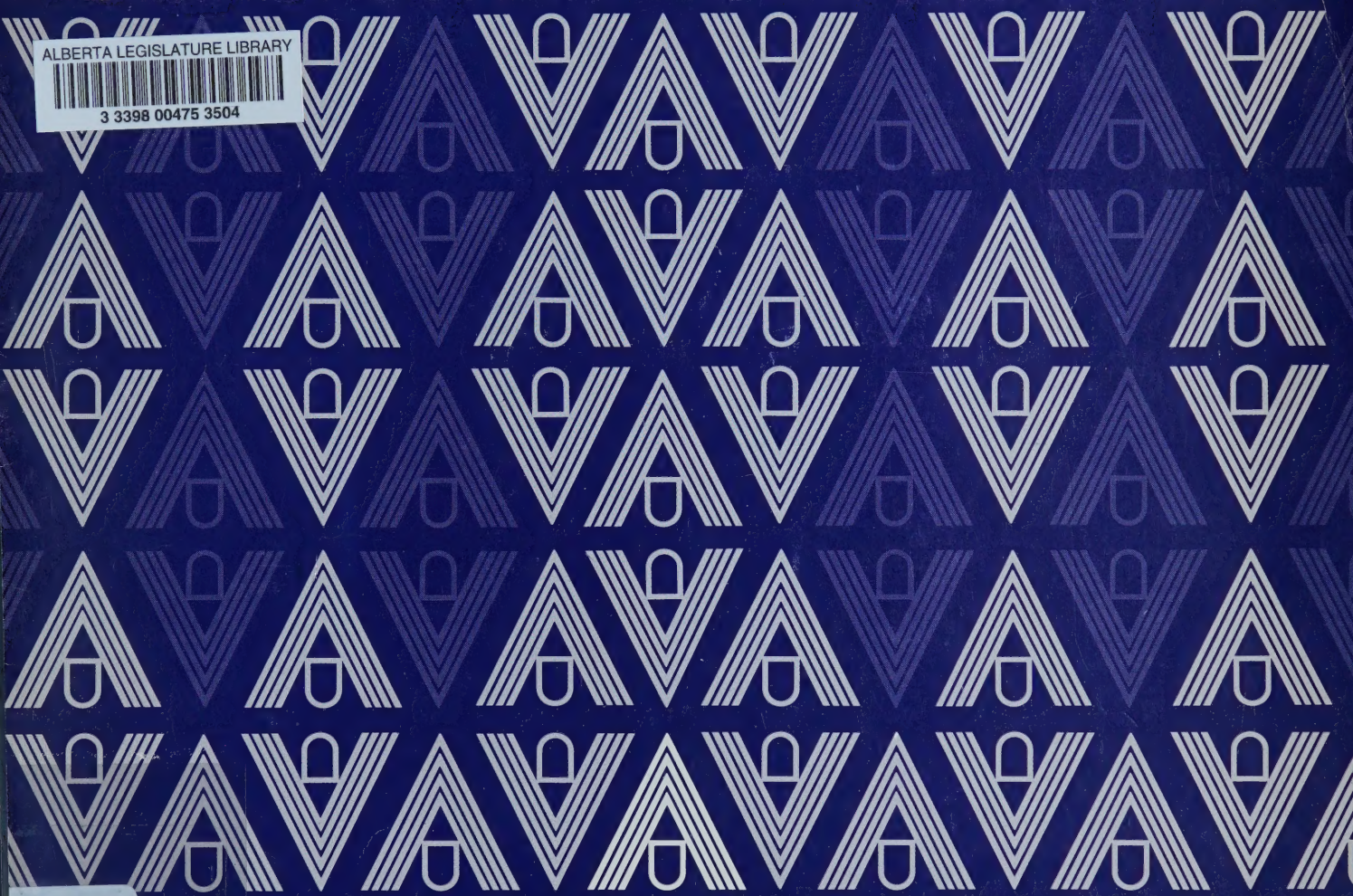

Athabasca University

an Experiment in Practical Planning

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an Experiment in Practical Planning

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Photograph of the Athabasca region of Alberta, by courtesy of the Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta and Athabasca Municipal Library, Athabasca, Alberta.

Athabasca University is located in Edmonton. It is named after a northern river which has both its origins and its terminal point within the province of Alberta. The Athabasca flows from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains to Lake Athabasca which has an outlet down the McKenzie River to the Arctic Ocean.

The Athabasca River has been an important transportation link from Edmonton to the Northwest Territories throughout the many years of northern development.

Photograph of the Edmonton skyline by courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

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The Bases of Instruction

The purpose of this brochure is to inform those interested in a job with Athabasca University what the organization is all about. The Athabasca University Governing Authority hopes this publication will be of interest to others as well, particularly those who have followed the history of Alberta's fourth university since its inception in June, 1970.

The need for a fourth university grew from enrolment pressures during the late sixties. These pressures were particularly evident at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Growth projections for that institution indicated enrolments approaching 25,000 by 1975. Since the Social Credit government then in power considered this the upper limits of growth for the university, it decided a fourth university should be established within the Edmonton metropolitan region.

The terms of the Order-in-Council of June 16, 1970, which established and provided direction for Athabasca University grew from several circumstances. The fact that two-thirds of the University of Alberta's enrolment was in the faculties of arts, science and education, dictated the Athabasca University curriculum. The growing concern over the costs of graduate study influenced the government's decision to limit the fourth university to undergraduate programs. The direction to provide alternatives in curriculum design and structure to the University of Alberta was an understandable outcome of geographic circumstance.

The members of the Governing Authority visited universities throughout Canada, the United States and England. In April, 1971, the authority published the results of this study in a document entitled *Athabasca University — Academic Concept.* This document which was circulated across Canada has become the statement of the academic design for the new institution.

On May 1, 1971, Dr. T. C. Byrne, deputy minister of education, was appointed Athabasca University's first president. Under his leadership, the small staff working with consultants refined the Athabasca University model. The Authority's academic planning committee chaired by Dr. Marino Kristjanson met with members of the arts, science and education faculties of the University of Alberta who provided helpful insights and criticism.

Enrolment at the University of Alberta in September, 1971, fell short of projections by 1,000 students. This led many to question the need for a fourth university.

In May, 1972, the Minister of Advanced Education, James Foster, announced the Conservative government's decision on the future of Athabasca: the government was not prepared, in view of enrolment trends, to proceed with building plans nor would it approve the location selected by the former government.

The government did, however, direct the Governing Authority to continue planning and approved the Authority's proposal to undertake a pilot study to test various dimensions of the proposed model. The pilot project is to be designed as an experiment in practical planning.

The project, to extend over five years commencing in 1972, consists of two phases. In the first phase, to be completed by September 1974, staff will be secured and resources acquired. The second phase, extending from 1974 through to 1977, will involve operating a "mini-college" with 250 students. The third phase, not yet presented to the government, would occur if university enrolments should start escalating again, or if it became apparent that Athabasca University with its alternative design attracted students who might not otherwise attend university. It would involve the establishment of a university for 2,000 students, large enough for economical operation, yet small enough to provide continuity in planning.

If the third phase were to start in 1977 — and this still subject to government approval — the first group of any significant numbers would not graduate until 1980. The task facing those involved in planning is to anticipate the nature of society and the needs of graduates in the eighties.●

A fundamental assumption of Athabasca University is that it will exist for students. The nature of the student body will determine the services rendered by it. Of the several components that will be necessary to operate Athabasca University such as faculty, material resources, instructional technology, and curriculum, students are the most important. Although this statement is obvious it does nonetheless provide a useful point of departure for posing the Athabasca University model.

Like the University of Alberta's students, Athabasca University's will, in all probability, commute daily to the central campus. They will be drawn largely from the Edmonton metropolitan region.

We can anticipate that by 1980, the student body will be made up of three identifiable groups. While there will be an intermingling of students from these groups, the distinctions among the groups will dictate variety in the types of service rendered by the university and in its modes of instruction.

The largest group will no doubt continue to be the 18- to 24-year old group. Many of them will have just graduated from high school but an increasing number will have worked or travelled for two or three years. Most will be unmarried, but the number of married students will continue to grow.

Most of them will not yet have made vocational choices. They will be seeking an answer to that most important question "What will I be?" By electing the disciplines of the arts and the sciences they will be considering much more than vocational choices. They will be searching for an understanding of themselves and of the society in which they live.

A second on-campus group will include older students, mostly in their 30's and 40's. While their reasons for attending Athabasca University may differ, they will have certain common attributes. They will have spent years working or raising a family; they will have clearly conceived ideas of what they expect from the university; and they will be able to handle independent study.

A third group will be the off-campus or extra-mural students. Unable to attend as regular day students, these students, if within commuting distance, may use the services of the university in the evening or on weekends. If not, they may secure materials by whatever means of communication is readily available. Dr. Walter Worth in his report *A Choice of Futures* outlines possibilities for this group in his proposals for an Alberta Academy.

The Dimensions of the Model are Derived from Assumptions

In creating a model for Athabasca University, we have made certain assumptions about its students and about the society in which they will live.[1] If the assumptions are valid and the dimensions of the model designed in response to these assumptions are practicable, Athabasca University will have made a contribution to the province's post-secondary system. It will not only accommodate an overflow of students from the University of Alberta, but it may provide an alternative which could influence the planning of future universities and colleges.

ASSUMPTION 1

The first assumption is that many students might prefer a university which, because of its size or its organization will provide increased opportunities for them to have closer contact with faculty members and with their fellow students.

The Cluster College Dimension

In searching for a way to deal with the problems of size and impersonality, the Governing Authority visited universities that had adopted the "cluster college" type of organization. The basic organizational unit is the college and the university is a federation of colleges. The Authority believes this organizational structure provides for community among faculty members, support staff and students and at the same time provides for growth without destroying the concept of community.

The College

An individual college as it is now planned would have from 600 to 650 students with a faculty of 25 to 30 drawn from all the disciplines in the arts and sciences ranging from anthropology to zoology. The faculty would include as well staff to organize library resources to meet the learning needs of students.

When the college reaches that predetermined size, its growth is complete. The university

[1] In *A Choice of Futures* the Alberta Commission on Educational Planning outlines the characteristics and implications of alternative futures for the last two decades of this century.

expands by adding another college.

A grouping or cluster of three colleges (approximately 2,000 students) would be large enough to sustain economically certain necessary central services such as library facilities, computer services and media production facilities. Further growth would be achieved through the establishment of another college or a cluster of colleges.

The Governing Authority is determined to plan a university which will operate as economically at undergraduate studies as any of its sister institutions. Accordingly, the Authority will insist that faculty-student ratios remain within tolerable limits.

Each college should aim at being as complete in its instructional programs as if it were alone on its own campus. Despite this objective, interchange among colleges will undoubtedly occur and special programs will develop supported by students drawn from a cluster of colleges.

ASSUMPTION II
It is assumed that many students wish to pursue general studies in the arts and sciences for at least three years beyond high school graduation, although some may wish to specialize immediately.

ASSUMPTION III
That within this group of students who wish to pursue general studies there is a sizeable number who can use knowledge drawn from different disciplines to explore significant social and environmental issues.

ASSUMPTION IV
That the general studies program could for many students lead to specific vocational choices in the fourth year or to specialization for graduate study.

The Curriculum Dimension
To meet these needs, the curriculum dimension of the model introduces four fields of study within each college. These are the Humanities, Communications, the Human Community which includes the social sciences, and the Physicial Environment involving primarily the natural and physical sciences.

These four fields embrace all of the disciplines customarily found in the arts and science faculties in addition to the interdisciplinary field of communications, one which brings together written and spoken language, the media and their uses, computing science, the psychology of communication, mathematics and other communication disciplines.[2]

The Extended Campus
The Authority proposes to select faculty members interested in conducting regional studies within the university's constituency. The university campus will extend far beyond its customary boundaries to establish centres wherever knowledge may be applied in understanding a problem, or wherever knowledge may be generated through the study of critical regional issues.

[2] See the Appendix for a fuller discussion of the fields of study.

Many universities are undertaking outreach studies on such issues as urban planning or the quality of urban living. Others are conducting field research on problems of ecological imbalance. Still others are exploring the problems of ethnic minorities.

To illustrate: A very significant issue facing Albertans is the disposition of our non-renewable energy resources. A study on this would involve data drawn from many sources within a particular region. The study would involve field experience and would demand knowledge from a range of disciplines in the natural, physical and social sciences.

The contributions of such outreach studies to learning are obvious. The hazards are great. When a university becomes visible throughout its constituency, it faces certain risks. In enlisting the aid of local communities, the university must, at the same time, establish a mutuality of interests with those communities. It cannot expect automatic co-operation; it must earn this by creating mutual understanding, mutual trust and mutual benefits with its outreach patrons.

The Fourth Year Dimension
Many graduates having completed studies leading to an arts or science degree may transfer to professional schools in law, medicine, architecture or education or may enter the labor force directly. Others may elect to remain for an additional year of specific vocational study or for preparation for entrance to graduate schools at other universities.

During the three years of general studies, the student, through field experience and through the pursuit of specific disciplines, should have become familiar with a relatively broad range of related occupations. By the fourth year, he should have narrowed his choice and commenced specific preparatory training by combining internships, theoretical study and field experience.

To illustrate: A student who has combined work in communications with the social sciences and with field experience in urbanization would have several options open to him. He might undertake a fourth year program which combines a practicum or internship with theoretical training in journalism; he might prepare for a career in public relations or in the communication media. Depending on his perceptions he might choose a program leading to a career in teaching, social service, town planning, business, sales or public administration.

Two points are pertinent. General study in the arts and sciences provides knowledge much of which should be useful in securing employment. The university has a responsibility to assist the student in identifying ways by which he can use that knowledge for satisfactory employment.

Secondly, the university has a responsibility to work with other organizations in the community to broaden opportunities for employment for graduates. Canada's labor force is increasing at unprecedented rates. This increased labor supply will become an economic asset only if fully employed. We do not add to the effectiveness of such a powerful economic factor by reducing the relative number of educated people. Educators, businessmen, industrialists, labor leaders and government officials should together seek new ways of utilizing the talents of the province's post-secondary graduates.

The following group of assumptions bear on the importance of learning as the major preoccupation of faculty and students. The model takes on further dimensions in response to these assumed needs.

ASSUMPTION V
It is assumed that the students who attend Athabasca University would benefit from the experience of designing their own programs of study.

ASSUMPTION VI
It is assumed that university students are capable of accepting increased responsibility for their own learning.

ASSUMPTION VII
It is assumed that students in the pursuit of their learning programs would benefit from consultation with faculty members either individually or in small group settings.

ASSUMPTION VIII
It is assumed that the principal value of lectures is to provide stimulation, leaving the delivery of information to other means.

The Dimension of Choice
Perhaps the most important year of a student's university career is his first, since it is his most impressionable.

For most students a full semester may be necessary to introduce him to some of the concerns of Athabasca University, what he might expect to achieve in it, the nature of knowledge, its organization into disciplines, the meaning of the term interdisciplinary, the scope of university resources, his responsibility for learning and possible directions for individual growth.

At the end of this introductory period, the student should have negotiated with his college a program of study for subsequent years. This program of study or "contract" would be the beginning of his university plan — his three year curriculum — one not irrevocably fixed however.

The probability is that the plan he arrives at will not differ greatly from that laid down by most universities. Nonetheless his first challenge should be to answer these two questions — "Why am I here?" and "What do I want to do?"

The Library-College Dimension
The student, having negotiated his program of studies, should have resources available to him to assist in the pursuit of the program.

An interesting approach to the provision of learning resources being tried in many universities throughout North America is that of the library-college. This, in effect, recognizes the library as the central resource —hardly a new concept. The library-college may be viewed as a type of teaching machine which the student uses to achieve his learning purposes.

Some students need only access to books organized in a logical fashion, others require an arrangement of written materials consistent with the courses they are following, still others benefit from directions to guide their reading. Some are less literate and find non-print materials of high value; most students derive benefits from a systematic organization of materials, of print and non-print forms in learning packages emphasizing the major topics of a discipline.

One term applied to these systematically organized packages is "learning systems". The trend in the development of learning systems is for the "hardware" or machine component to become less expensive and more flexible and for the "software" component (human ingenuity) to increase in importance.

The new instructional technology, if it can be called such, involves a systematic organization of information — its major component is content arranged into small comprehensible units expressed in different forms with "feedback" provided to the student through frequent evaluation.

Teams involving faculty members, students, and technicians build these learning systems. Once devised they may be widely used within a university, a group of universities, or within a correspondence network.

The Interpersonal Dimension

A learning system is no substitute for people. Students must have access to faculty members in some regular and established fashion.

The model for Athabasca University proposes that this faculty-student interchange occur through tutorials, short lecture series and seminars.

Characteristics of the tutorial distinguishing it from the traditional lecture system are its limited size (perhaps no more than five persons), its informality, its ease in scheduling, and its more intimate faculty-student rapport.

The disadvantages of the tutorial as an organizational device for transmitting knowledge are its lack of structure and low faculty-student ratio. The Governing Authority considers that by combining the tutorial with learning systems both of these disadvantages can be overcome.

The use of the new technology may or may not reduce costs. It will not be accepted, however, by either students or faculty unless it is viewed as incidental to and supportive of the development of community among faculty, support staff and students.

A second device for student-faculty interrelationship is the short lecture series. Short lecture series varying in length up to three weeks should enrich opportunities for learning. These may be delivered by faculty members, students or visitors from the immediate community or from distant places.

A lecture series as conceived for Athabasca University does not perform its customary university function. It will not bear the burden of instruction, that is, the delivery of information. The lecture series demands that the lecturer deal with new ideas, explore interdisciplinary relationships, elaborate on unpublished yet significant research findings, pose interesting and controversial hypotheses, challenge the conventional wisdom, and even perhaps criticize the establishment.

Students may organize lecture series on topics quite removed from the conventional.

The short lecture series provides a device for the use of distinguished scholars, community leaders, or national figures as members of visiting faculty.

A third device for achieving the student-faculty exchange and rapport so vital in the educative process is the seminar. Ideally seminars at Athabasca University will centre around human problems of current importance and consequence to the university's constituency. Seminars will involve students of differing interests and faculty members of differing disciplines.

ASSUMPTION IX

It is assumed that continuous or year around operation of the university will provide opportunities for the young, middle-aged, and the old.

The Dimension of Year Round Operation

Self instruction through the use of learning systems implies flexibility in organization. Learning systems permit the student to set his own pace. Tutorials are less formal than dental appointments and not nearly as painful. Evaluation can be individualized eliminating the usual term end examination rituals.

It should be possible for a student to enter university at any time and to withdraw at any time.

These dimensions describe the structure and processes of the Athabasca University model. Each dimension will require more intensive study and planning in its implementation. Further, the total college, that is all the components of the model working together in the dynamics of the operation must also be tested. The posing of a model, no matter how carefully conceived, does not necessarily assure its practicability.

The Authority, nonetheless, regards these dimensions as non-negotiable until thoroughly tested and rejected as impractical. Those who join the Athabasca University faculty should be fully aware of and be prepared to work within the dimensions of the model as outlined in this document. The Governing Authority regards the major dimensions of the model as fixed until thoroughly tested.●

The Pilot Study

As indicated in the Introduction, the government has approved Athabasca University Governing Authority's proposal for a five-year pilot study extending through to September 1977. This would involve no more than 250 students and sufficient staff to operate the project.

The project is developmental in nature. It will permit a study in depth of the proposed dimensions of the Athabasca University model. Not only will they be examined in detail, they will in fact be created and made operative. Each will be tested and evaluations made in terms of the purpose for which it was designed. The model must establish its worth.

The mini-college will be a small replica of the basic college unit for the proposed university. The dynamics of a college will be observed through the operation of the miniature model.

A college or a cluster of colleges in action perform as a social system. The process through which the various parts of the college interact to achieve its purposes constitutes the dynamics of the system. How each component plays its role in relation to the others will determine the total system's success.

A Chart of the Project

The chart on the opposite page examines various aspects of the study. The vertical axis lists the programs to be initiated and developed. The horizontal axis categorizes instructional modes. The cells in the body of the chart enclose the dimensions of the model, each one relating to major headings along both axes. ●

Pilot Project Model		Modes of Instruction		
		Institutional	**Membership**	**Autonomous**
Programs	**The Communications System**	**1.** *Learning Systems (LS)* a. Provide for self instruction in the four fields. b. Resources — Academic and Communication faculties and students. c. Students use (LS) to undertake degree plan.	**5.** *The Occasional Lecture Series* a. To be delivered by resident and visiting faculty, community leaders, students. b. For enlightenment rather than credit. c. Voluntary attendance.	**9.** *The University Plan* a. Student negotiates his own learning program. b. He carries out degree plan through independent learning. c. He gains standing by completing (LS).
	The Extended Campus	**2.** *Regional Studies* a. Outreach activities involving faculty and students. b. A source of problems for interdisciplinary study. c. Community involvement through mututality of interests. d. Activities contribute to achievement of student's degree plan.	**6.** *Seminars on regional Studies* a. Involve faculty members and students. b. Dealing with issues, providing applied knowledge, research. c. Stimulus to the learning of disciplines and to tutorial discussion.	**10.** a. He may elect one or more outreach studies in degree plan. b. Outreach activities provide experience in knowledge application. c. They (OA) bring new perceptions on vocation.
	Tutorial Services	**3.** *Solving the Student-Tutor Equation* a. Imposing of limited institutional norms. b. Interpreting institutional expectations for individual degree plan. c. Providing for community among faculty and students.	**7.** *Small Group Tutorial (2-7 members)* a. Periodic meetings scheduled by group consensus. b. No structure or purpose imposed by the University. c. No evaluation for credit.	**11.** a. Student chooses and negotiates type of tutorial service. b. Student uses the tutorial to meet his felt needs. c. Student elects available educational and vocational counselling.
	Administration and Governance	**4.** a. Developing long-range proposals for governance and administration. b. Interpreting programs for public understanding. c. Establishing bridges within the university's constituency.	**8.** a. Planning present and future space needs for groups. b. Providing leadership in the evaluation of group activities.	**12.** a. Planning present and future accommodation for students. b. Establishing methods of student accounting. c. Interpreting student achievement to other universities.

A Program Defined

The programs are the most significant development issues. A program in this project is also defined within the terms of systems theory. It is, in effect, a subsystem of the college with many of the characteristics of the total system. A program has discernible limits making it identifiable as a distinct operating unit. It is designed to carry out certain specific tasks. The program has several components which work together in reasonable harmony to achieve the university's objectives.

The term 'program' has different meanings in different situations. In an educational institution it is generally used to describe instruction. Its use within the context of the pilot study is to define a group of activities having a common set of purposes. In this sense all or most of the activities of the institution may be subsumed under its four major programs.

The most important component of any program is people. Materials, space and facilities may also be imperatives. Frequently technology (technical procedures deriving from experience and theoretical knowledge) is an indispensible component. The technology is usually an expression of the knowledge and skills of people using the necessary physical resources. Certain ways of deploying human and material resources may prove more useful than others with the consequence that a particular organizational structure may become a significant component of this system.

The four programs listed along the vertical axis are: the Communications System, the Extended Campus, the Tutorial Service and Administration and Governance. Each of these programs exemplify in varying degrees the general characteristics of programs outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

The Communications System Program

The Communications System is probably the most complex of the four programs. It encompasses a wide range of professional knowledge and skills as well as sophisticated material and equipment.

Purposes of the communications program are:

- To acquire, store and process information.
- To incorporate the various print and non-print forms into communications outlets.
- To provide systematic approaches to learning through the preparation of learning systems.
- To develop those systems as units or modules within each of the disciplines of the four fields of study.

Three groups of people each with distinctly different knowledge, skills and experience are required. The tutorial staff drawn from the various disciplines within the four fields of study provide the disciplinary knowledge. They set learning objectives, contribute information, and decide upon learning procedures to be used within particular disciplines.

A second group contributes knowledge and skill in the acquiring and processing of information. Members of this group are familiar with the various media, print and non-print, through which information is communicated, and they are skilled in the

techniques of organizing information systematically to achieve learning objectives.

The third group is made up of students. While the communication flow is designed for students they, at the same time, are an important component in program development. Information must be organized so as to have meaning to them. Consequently their capacities, interests and perceptions of need must influence and even dictate the nature of the information, the choice of media, the methods of evaluation and the provisions for self-instruction.

The material resources include all forms and combinations of print, audio, still- and motion-visual media.

While there is already available an overabundance of communication hardware, the most pressing need is to develop materials for its effective use. The trend is to use relatively simple and inexpensive devices to convey information that has been systematically organized by knowledgeable people.

The job of the Chairman of the Communications System in full partnership with the Chairman, Academic Programs, is to coordinate the work of the three groups by developing effective procedures for achieving the program's objectives.

The Extended Campus

The Extended Campus is recognized as a major feature of the Athabasca University model.

The purpose of this program is to provide both students and faculty with opportunities for learning by:

- Observing directly environmental and social problems existing within the university's constituency.
- Examining these problems from the background of knowledge derived from several disciplines.
- Generating new knowledge through the study of institutions operating within specific social and physical environments.

The components of the program are primarily groups of people. The academic staff will play a leading role, contributing knowledge and skills originating from disciplinary interests. Students will also be an integral part of these outreach activities not as clients of the university but as participants in one of the university's major programs.

A third group not as readily identifiable but equally significant is the people living and working in the regions included within the extended campus. This group should be a cross section of people in the primary and secondary industries, the service industries, business, as well as public and private organizations of the area.

The physical and natural environment within the region is a significant component. The region's resources, its wildlife, and vegetation provide sources of information for the program.

The extended campus should include both urban and rural environments. The urban environment will obviously generate a different emphasis in activities. Nonetheless, the shifting relationships between the two

environments will also be another area of study.

It is difficult to anticipate the material and physical resources necessary to operate the program before identifying and developing the program. These in large part will be determined by the various disciplines to be involved. Obviously transportation facilities and some type of living and working accommodations will be necessary within the boundaries of the extended campus.

Procedures for the collection and storage of data relevant to social and environmental issues within the university's constituency must be developed. The first task is to identify existing sources of data in the constituency. The task of developing procedures for storing data must be assumed by the Communications System as a part of its service function.

The Tutorial Services Program

A third program on the vertical axis of the chart is that of Tutorial Services. While it is difficult to rank programs in a hierarchy of importance, the Authority views this program as most essential to the achievement of university objectives. It is perhaps the most experimental, hence the most challenging of the three major programs concerned with student learning.

The purposes of the program are:

- To provide each student with a means of identifying with the university through a tutor or through a series of tutors.
- To provide an immediate and accessible advisor to whom the student may turn whenever he feels in need of information, advice and guidance.
- To arrange small group tutorials as organizational devices for meeting the educational, social and psychological needs of students.
- To establish within the college clearly defined tutorial groups (one tutor to 20 students) to achieve the feeling of community among faculty members and students.
- To explore the many issues of tutor-student relations.

People almost exclusively constitute the components of the program, the two groups being, quite obviously, faculty members and students.

Evolving procedures through which the objectives of the program may be achieved will constitute this phase of the experiment in practical planning. These depend so much on the perception of the tutorial role as seen by faculty members and students that it is difficult to anticipate them now. Frequent staff seminars will undoubtedly identify those that appear to be more successful than others.

Governance and Administration

The fourth program, Governance and Administration, while in no sense the most important, is nonetheless indispensable. Without it, other programs could not function effectively. Yet, in terms of the achievement of the study's objectives, or for that matter of university objectives, the fourth program is perhaps the least productive. It contributes only insofar as other programs within the university succeed or fail.

Though Governance and Administration are subsumed under the same heading, they are discrete activities.

The major purpose of governance is to make decisions and to oversee their implementation. While the responsibility for all decision making rests ultimately with the university's Governing Authority, that body usually restricts its attention to those decisions which give broad direction to university affairs.

Many issues of governance are being debated currently. Should the structures be bicameral or unicameral? Should there be a board of governors separate from a faculty council or a single co-ordinated authority including all sectors of the university community, the public, faculty and students? Should the processes of decision making follow the monocratic, collegial or political models? Should decisions be made by one group and communicated to others within the university community? Should they be arrived at through consensus within the total community or should they be negotiated by adversaries following the procedures of collective bargaining?

Administration is the term applied to the sub-system within the university which exists to implement the decisions of government. The administrative organization involves both structures and processes. The customary structure in large organizations is hierarchical, triangular in shape with its apex resting in the president's office. The processes are evident in the roles performed by the various officials that make up the hierarchy.

The distinctions drawn between governance and administration derive from different tasks within the decision making process. However, the close relationship between making and implementing a decision gives these two activities many common purposes and mutual concerns.

Governors and administrators are both concerned with funds. One of their major preoccupations is with budgeting. They are concerned, as well, with providing human and material resources and accommodation for university programs. This leads to involvement in personnel, purchasing, planning and maintenance of buildings, etc.

Governance and Administration has two emphases, one contributing to the establishment and maintenance of the four programs of the pilot study and the other involving the planning of procedures in governance and administration appropriate for the university when it achieves full operation. Both emphases are reflected below:

- To facilitate the pilot study by supplying the necessary people, materials, facilities, and accommodation for its various programs.
- To develop through experience in the dynamics of operation, proposals for both structures and processes in university governance and administration.
- To test possible methods of program planning, budgeting and accounting.
- To examine, develop and assess a group of personnel policies.
- To arrive at appropriate space needs for university programs.
- To interpret programs to the many publics within the university's constituency.

As with the three other programs, the major

component of the fourth program is people. One group is made up of those directly concerned with governance and administration. The academic staff, the second group, contribute from their experiences in the operation of the programs. The students are participants in the other three programs and should help in the fourth as well.

The literature on program planning and budgeting for universities and colleges is expanding rapidly. Models are available which can be modified and applied within the framework of the project. One issue will be to establish the extent to which computing services may further the objectives of the program.

The Modes of Instruction

Three modes of instruction appear along the horizontal axis of the chart—the institutional, membership and autonomous. In the cells under these categories are listed the dimensions of the Athabasca University model as extensions of the four programs along the vertical axis.

The Institutional Mode

The institutional mode emphasizes the requirements of the society to be served by the university. These are expressed differently by different institutions and obviously change from time to time. Educational institutions must anticipate the requirements of the society in which its graduates will live and respond to these without unduly restricting the individual student's freedom of choice.

The apparatus of this mode is familiar. It consists of prescribed courses within a group of pre-planned instructional programs, regularly scheduled classes and term-end examinations. The emphasis among these dimensions of the conventional university model has shifted over the past few years but this pattern remains typical.

The Membership Mode

In the membership mode, the group is free to elect its program of study and discussion. This it arrives at through group consensus rather than external prescription. Having decided upon their learning purposes the group members invite a knowledgeable person to assist them in achieving their goals. That person carries no special status within the group beyond his capability as a resource person for a limited time.

The Autonomous Mode

The autonomous mode exists when the individual is free to set his own learning purposes and to choose his own strategies for inquiry. He has achieved or is in the process of achieving independence in learning.

Every person who has gone to school and who is reasonably mature has experienced these three instructional modes. The membership and autonomous modes do not always exist within the formal structures of educational organizations. They may not be part of the official curriculum but they are often part of the extra-curriculum.

A diversity in the application of these modes exists among the universities and colleges across North America. Many still emphasize the institutional mode exclusively; others permit some freedom in program selection and in learning procedures; a very few are completely free with no institutional demands of any kind.

The objectives set for Athabasca University provides directions for planning. The problem facing those involved in development is to redefine the institutional mode to permit greater emphasis on both membership and autonomous approaches.

Dimensions Listed Under "Institutional"
The dimensions of the Athabasca University model which reflect on institutional emphasis appear in the appropriate cells of the first column. A consideration of the details of each makes it possible to explore issues in greater depth.

Resources of the University Set Limits

The resources of the university, both human and material, set limits to student options. It becomes difficult to move outside the body of knowledge which the university has made readily available. Information on astrology, for instance, will not be included in the university's communications system whereas information on astronomy will. A college will probably have an astronomer on its faculty; it is not likely to employ an astrologer.

A Knowledge of Disciplines

The learning systems produced through the communications program give direction to student learning. The formal teaching of the university is to be carried out, not through lectures, but through materials systematically organized for self-instruction. The contents of these learning packages, the resources on which they draw, the evaluative procedures integral to each unit or module, conform to the institutional mode.

These learning materials should serve as links between the institutional and autonomous modes (cells 9 and 1) between the needs of individuals as perceived by students and the requirements of the institution as conceived by faculty. The student builds his program of studies to include some of the disciplines within one or more of the four fields of study. He employs university resources to pursue knowledge within these disciplinary areas.

Outreach Studies Reflect the Institutional Mode

The outreach activities of the Extended Campus program provide further institutional emphasis. These studies involve the disciplines in action. Knowledge drawn from several disciplines in the exploration of social and environmental problems may strike directly at significant social issues.

Ecological studies illustrate this view. Studies of this type involve specific regions within the extended campus. They encompass a number of disciplines within one or more of the university's four curriculum fields. They relate knowledge directly to the problems of man and his physical environment. Currently and for some time to come, these studies may reflect a major social preoccupation—the re-orientation of man with nature.

Studies undertaken within the Extended Campus program constitute further links between society's requirements and the individual's perception of need. Most students will choose in their degree programs to participate actively in one or more of the outreach activities. Such experiences should grant the student an entry to interdisciplinary study, involving him in field research and introducing him to many vocational opportunities.

Tutorials May Implement Three Modes

The Tutorial Services program may emphasize any one or all of the instructional modes. This program seeks to explore all possible manifestations in student-tutor relations. Some of these will, no doubt, stress the institutional approach, others will move towards the freedom of the membership mode, still others will encourage the achievement of autonomous behaviour.

Irrespective of how lightly the institution exerts its influence over students, misunderstandings, sharp differences of view, possibly even conflict will occur. Tutorial Services should provide an opportunity for expression of these views. The tutorial can be an important communication link between faculty and staff if the information flows both ways.

Dimensions Under the Membership Mode

The membership mode involves group action. The proposed formal groupings referred to throughout these pages are listed on the chart in the cells of the membership column. An examination of these proposals will indicate how far the university might move towards the "free" side of the continuum.

The word "class" has been removed from the university's lexicon of planning terms. There will be no regularly scheduled lecture sessions extending over one or two semesters in time. Students will be guided in their learning through other procedures.

The Occasional Lecture Series

This does not, however, preclude the occasional lecture series. These have been defined elsewhere as relatively short, delivered by resident or visiting faculty, by persons from government, business and industry and by some students. A lecture series of this type, commonly found on most university campuses, enriches opportunities for learning.

Such an activity is within the spirit of the membership instructional mode. While the topics for the series may originate from many sources the audience is entirely self-selected. Each person who follows a series has made a conscious decision to do so for whatever reasons he deems significant.

The Interdisciplinary Seminar

Interdisciplinary seminars on regional problems are directly related to outcomes of the outreach activities of the Extended Campus program.

It is difficult to foresee the frequency of such meetings and whether they will regularly or occasionally scheduled. Their purpose will be to plan activities, to explore background information relevant to the study being undertaken, to establish data gathering procedures, and to provide for interdisciplinary exchange. The meetings should include faculty members, students and support staff.

Once a student has selected a particular outreach activity his attendance at these seminars, while not obligatory, may become imperative. The usefulness of these meetings will depend on the organizing skills of those directing the activity and the interest in and zest of faculty members for intellectual interchange.

The Small Group Tutorial

Much has already been said about the small group tutorial. This point, however, bears repeating. Of all formal groupings of students, the small group tutorial offers the best opportunity to achieve the membership mode in its purest form. A group not exceeding seven persons including the tutor makes consensus easier to achieve. The tutor is there not as an authority figure but as a facilitator. In the tutorial role he is not viewed as a resource person from a discipline; rather he is a faculty member who assists the group in establishing its goals and in planning ways to attain them.

Since the group should be free to set its goals, the tutor must be prepared to accept the decisions arrived at by the group. Membership in the group will reflect varied interests, consequently discussions and formal study are likely to be interdisciplinary. These may relate to problems deriving from regional studies or to national or international issues of current significance. They may have to do with personal problems highly significant to most members of the group or they may be quite impersonal.

One might view the tutorial as a type of barometer registering the concerns of students as they move more deeply into university life. The tutorial might reveal the students' depth of social concern, their reactions to social issues, their attitudes toward environmental problems or their feelings towards global affairs.

Dimensions Under the Autonomous Mode

The dimensions of the university model that appear under "Autonomous" (Cells 9-12) deal almost exclusively with the student role. Many of the university's objectives are nonetheless expressed in these statements.

A major dimension referred to throughout this document is the expectation that each student will develop and negotiate with the university a personal program of studies leading to an undergraduate degree. It is expected that the student will present this degree program which will allow for changes and will undertake and complete the program over a period of time.

The student will, of course, need advice and support in meeting this obligation. The full resources of his college should be available to him including material and human resources.

One of the issues for the pilot study is to discover the extent to which the four programs can lend support to the beginning student in this task. Learning systems which introduce the student to each of the four fields of study might acquaint him with a group of disciplines, something of their basic structure, methods followed in extending the boundaries of knowledge within a single discipline or group of disciplines, procedures of evaluation and the vocational opportunities deriving from disciplinary or interdisciplinary bodies of knowledge.

A further purpose is to help the student understand what a university is and how Athabasca University fits into a post-secondary system. He should learn what he can expect from his university experience and what the university may expect from him.

The activities of the Extended Campus Program may prove useful to the beginning student. He might attach himself immediately to an activity by attending a seminar series or by visiting its regional headquarters and becoming actively involved. This "plunge in approach" has much to recommend it.

The tutorial service may prove equally useful in this period of initiation. A tutorial group including both beginning and advanced students provides opportunities for peer counselling. Counselling by a tutor or full-time counsellor should assist the student in meeting the first challenge posed by the university—to answer these questions: "Why am I here?" and "What do I propose to do about it?"

Independent Study

Self-instruction is one of the major dimensions of the Athabasca University model. The Communications System is being designed to provide the student with the necessary materials; administration must solve the problem of appropriately equipped study space; the activities of the Extended Campus should motivate the student to explore one or more disciplines in depth; Tutorial Services should create opportunities for the student to reveal any satisfactions or frustrations he is encountering in his learning.

The intensive planning to achieve an environment supportive of independent study indicates the importance attached to it by the Athabasca University Governing Authority. One objective of the university is to assist the student in developing his own strategies for learning, strategies which will not only assist during his university years, but also through life. A life plan which includes periods of recurring formal study may become typical for most people.

The pilot staff will be concerned with assessing the effectiveness of the structures and processes designed for self-instruction. The central question will be how much independence can a student achieve or will he wish to achieve in the pursuit of knowledge?

Relationships with others, both faculty members and students, will be exceedingly important. No matter how well designed are the learning materials, the student will, no doubt, feel the need for the support of interested persons. He will seek explanations, encouragement and the opportunity to share ideas with those who have specialized knowledge and whose scholarly interests will provide him with stimulation.

The Student and the Resources

The student should be free to consult such people as he needs to consult. As a resource person the faculty member is naturally committed to achieve the objectives of the communications program. He should be equally responsive to requests from individual students. How this service can be most effectively rendered should be explored in the pilot study.

Many students in university for the first time and even those following recurrent programs of study will ponder the question of vocation. Planning in anticipation of the fourth year will raise issues for students leading them to search widely for help.

One phase of the pilot study will be to plan,

develop and evaluate counselling services for the university. While these services should include assistance to the faculty in providing educational and personal guidance, vocational counselling will also constitute an important activity.

The student should have available effective counselling services no matter what the source. This support is necessary if he is to achieve increasing maturity in this university setting.

The Student and the Extended Campus

The student will include in his university plan the nature and extent of his involvement in the activities of the Extended Campus. The right to choose his activity and decide on the depth of his involvement rests with the student. Having made the choice, the student will have to bear the responsibility of his decisions.

The Student and Tutorial Services

The tutorial group provides to the student an opportunity for membership in a group which may meet many of his personal, social and intellectual needs. The choice rests with him. He may elect membership in a tutorial group or he may choose to consult with his tutor as an individual. Within the limits of the tutor's accessibility, he may do both.

Ways in which the student-tutor relationship may contribute to the student's growth should be explored in the pilot study. The evaluations placed on the tutorial experience by students should be exceedingly relevant in assessing the usefulness of this dimension.

Issues for Research

While the pilot study is a planning exercise in development, it will also involve research. A rigorous study of the following issues should lead to identifying researchable problems, to reading literature, establishing data gathering procedures, developing evaluation instruments and reporting on pertinent findings. These issues stated as questions are currently emerging from the initial stages in planning. Others equally if not more significant will emerge as the project proceeds:

1. How much can be expected from students and what support should they receive in the planning and negotiating of individual programs of study?
2. What formal procedures, if any, should be followed in selecting students from the different age groups who wish to attend Athabasca University?
3. Can a systematic approach to learning through the organized communication system provide an alternative to the traditional lecture method in the delivery of information?
4. How much support does the student require beyond learning systems to assist him in the pursuit of knowledge?
5. Will activities within the Extended Campus contribute to faculty and student growth through the identification and observation of and involvement with problems of the physical and social environments?
6. What is the range of possible answers in solving the student-tutor equation, one which approaches the perfect solution?
7. Will the proposed programs facilitate continuous year-round university operation or are semester arrangements still necessary?

8. How can the proposed programs include the third group of students, those interested in extra-mural studies? Is the proposed Alberta Academy feasible within the limits of these programs?

9. How can space, that is accommodation and facilities, be designed and allocated to meet the needs of the proposed programs?

10. What is the real and most efficacious role of the faculty?

11. What are the effective methods of evaluating achievement as the student works through his university degree plan? ●

This section speaks directly to those interested in employment with this project in university development. The Athabasca University Governing Authority needs persons to work on its developmental team. The Authority needs a staff knowledgeable in several disciplines and possessing a wide range of special abilities and skills.

The Authority recognizes the limitations imposed by its offers of employment. It cannot, for instance, give any assurance of continuous appointment beyond four years, the anticipated length of the project. At the same time, the Authority recognizes this period will cover a large part of a person's career. Understandably, one can expect those interested in joining the project staff to express many concerns.

The following questions will occur to many who are considering employment with Athabasca University. The response to each question should indicate the opportunities and limitations in joining the Athabasca University faculty. The questions are phrased in the first person since they are intended to express possible personal concerns.

1. *Is there a place for me on the project faculty with my particular scholarly interest?*
The first consideration is whether you wish to be part of a developmental group testing a model quite different to most of those currently in existence.

The Authority proposes appointing up to 15 persons to its tutorial staff reflecting the various disciplines contained within the four fields of study.

For the field of the Humanities, the Authority is looking for persons not only knowledgeable in one or more of the humanistic disciplines but concerned with the role of the humanities in relation to the other fields of study and to emerging personal and social issues. The disciplines are such as these: history, philosophy and literature.

For the Communications field, the Authority is in need of persons competent in this rapidly expanding interdisciplinary area. These disciplines have been identified with the communicating process: language or linguistics, rhetoric, psychology, the fine arts, computing science, mathematics.

The social sciences tend to have many common elements in learning. While the Authority will be employing persons with different backgrounds, it hopes to secure those who are competent in more than one discipline. The disciplines represented will probably include anthropology, political science, economics, sociology, social psychology and social geography.

The study of ecology may serve to introduce the disciplines of the fourth field, the Physical Environment. Appointments should include a physicist, a chemist, a biologist, a mathematician and an ecologist.

These are the major guidelines for the selection of staff. A balance will be struck among the four fields of study in reaching decisions on the 15 to be appointed.

2. *What title will I be given?*
The Governing Authority has decided on the title of "tutor" for its faculty members during the pilot study. This title has been chosen because it is not widely used within universities or colleges throughout North America. Since the title does not imply any specific set of duties, the Authority can define its expectations for this post with greater freedom.

The Authority does not wish to qualify the title by adjectives to designate rank. Each faculty member will be undertaking similar tasks, making variations in title unnecessary. The work of the university may be achieved more effectively by employing a common term for the members of its academic staff.

This does not preclude differences in income. The salary scale will be graded similarly to those existing for older universities within the province. Appointments will be made to the faculty at salary levels commensurate with the scholastic standing and experience of the appointees.

Comparisons can then be made with ranks existing in other universities through the appointee's placement on the salary scale. A tutor will be placed in the assistant or associate salary range by mutual agreement.

If, on leaving the service of Athabasca University, the faculty member wishes to interpret his status through a traditional designation he may do so by reference to his placement on the salary schedule. He may legitimately claim assistant, associate or full professorial status consistent with his basic salary.

The title of tutor is to designate a position

with a particular set of duties for Athabasca University. It has meaning within the university. How the faculty member describes his duties to others outside the university is a matter of personal preference.

3. *What will be my major duties?*
Your duties will be determined by the activities of the programs described in the preceding sections. Throughout the pilot study you will be expected to contribute to the achievement of all four programs. Your participation in each will depend on timing and the exigencies of planning.

These comments on the expectations of the Governing Authority for its faculty members describes the duties of the tutor.

The tutor will serve as a resource person within his disciplinary or interdisciplinary area. He will work with the Chairman of Communications System and his staff in the development of resources for self instruction.

He will serve also as a resource person for students. As such, he will, of course, give support to students in their study of disciplines. A major purpose in these contacts will be to discover the inadequacies of the learning systems as voiced by students. This type of valuation should prove useful towards the continuous improvement in communicating information.

A useful distinction can be made between a communication system and a communication aid. A communication aid assists a lecturer in presenting information and may be anything from a piece of chalk to a brief but pointed motion picture clip. A communication system is purportedly self-sufficient transmitting information independent of any external support. It is or should be completely self-contained.

We have achieved almost all that is possible in the use of communications aids. We are only beginning to explore the potentialities of communication systems.[3] The tutor's objective should be to assess the effectiveness of learning systems as vehicles of self-help without external intervention. If he intervenes, it should be to make the system more self-sufficient.

The tutor will not teach by the customary didactic procedures. His teaching will be done through participation in the programs of the pilot study.

A second area of service for the tutor exists in the activities of the Extended Campus. One or more outreach studies in a designated region should be undertaken by the tutorial Staff. Methods of identifying problems, establishing rapport with local communities, conducting interdisciplinary seminars, allocating research tasks and consolidating reports must be developed. These are challenges for the faculty during the next four years.

A third set of duties is associated with the program entitled "Tutorial Services". The Authority considers this a basic service to be performed by every faculty member. Since, in this program, the tutor is not necessarily acting in the role of a resource person, it may be possible to include others outside the tutorial staff in its activities. Members of both the communications and administrative staffs would be expected to perform tutorial duties.

It is difficult to anticipate what duties a tutor might perform to facilitate the program in administration and governance. The Authority proposes a very small administrative staff, perhaps no more than three persons. This being the case, some duties customarily performed by administrators may have to be undertaken by members of the tutorial group.

The pilot study is an exercise in research and development. All members of the project staff are in effect researchers in university organization. The tutorial staff will share in the operation of a college and participate in the evaluation of that operation. This will involve continuous planning and appraisal through discussions and more formal evaluative procedures.

4. *To whom will I report?*
The Governing Authority will appoint a Chairman with the provisional title Chairman of Academic Programs. He will have responsibilities throughout all four programs. His position will be parallel to that of Chairman of the Communications System. These two persons along with the President will constitute the administrative hierarchy of Athabasca University throughout the duration of the pilot study.

In the program entitled "The Communications System" the Chairman of the Academic Programs and his staff develop instructional

[3] Bretz, R. *A Taxonomy of Communication Media*, Educational Technology Publications, pp. 41-43.

materials in full partnership with the Chairman of Communications System and his team who supply the technical knowledge in processing and organizing information to facilitate self-instruction.

The partnership of the academic and communication staff continues into the Extended Campus program, where task forces undertake both academic and communication studies, arrange for resources and equipment and perform those duties that are deemed essential for the success of the program.

In the Tutorial Services program, the partnership will explore the most effective ways of holding tutorials, organize and participate in faculty seminars on tutorial procedures, and undertake such other tasks as are necessary to develop and evaluate the program.

The Chairman of Academic Programs along with other interested and responsible persons will study and decide on matters related to the negotiation of individual programs of study. Since these will constitute the basis for awarding degrees, they are of major concern to the academic faculty of the university.

5. *Will I be a member of a department?*
The answer is no. You will be a member of a group having various disciplinary interests.

The basic unit in the Athabasca University organization will be the college. You will be a member of a college rather than of a department.

6. *Will I be able to carry on with special research interests?*
The Governing Authority hopes that a spirit of inquiry will permeate the Pilot Project, for observation, records, analysis, reports and debate will be necessary. The Authority will encourage inquiry and believes that an inquiring mind is an essential attribute in a person appointed to the staff.

The Authority recognizes that persons with special research interests may have much to contribute to the research and development of the Project because of their training and experience, but the Authority will not provide space, personnel, utilities or other resources to support research unrelated to the Project. The Authority is prepared to negotiate the resources it can provide when special research interests and the University's goals coincide.

In keeping with the Governing Authority's distinction between self-centered research and research coinciding with the institution's goals, Athabasca University will assess the merit of its staff by their scholarly activity in preference to an annual list of papers published and grants obtained.

7. *Will I be able to undertake work outside my regular duties?*
This raises one of the major issues faced by most universities. While no policies have yet been formulated, the Governing Authority holds the view that the tasks of the pilot study will occupy its staff full time; but the Authority foresees that the staff may be requested to act as educational consultants and is prepared to negotiate terms.

One of the planning issues for the project is to discover ways of rewarding faculty members for extra effort within the university operation. This may be done in one of two ways—by increased income through promotion or by financial recognition for special tasks beyond the limits of regular duty.

8. *How many months each year will I be expected to be on duty?*
The Authority expects all members of its staff to be on duty eleven months each year. The activities of the four programs will not be related necessarily to the yearly ebb and flow in time typical of other universities and colleges.

One can readily see why this will be true during the pilot study. The preparation of learning materials will go on continuously through the entire four of five year period. The activities of the Extended Campus and the Tutorial Services programs might, however, fluctuate according to season. In fact, some relationship may evolve between the customary university time divisions (semesters, quarters) and the activities of these programs. Nonetheless, when one considers the planning and evaluation necessary to complete the pilot study, continuous effort throughout the entire period seems imperative.

One of the dimensions in the model to be tested is the feasibility of "year round" or continuous operation. This should make university service available to many who find that normal schedules exclude them from university attendance.

9. *Is there an opportunity for promotion and how shall I be judged as having earned it?*
Moving up the salary scale will be possible each year. Promotions will be based on merit.

Merit will be determined by evaluating scholarly activity and the contributions of a faculty member to the programs of the university. The effectiveness of his work in the development of instructional materials, his relationships to students through the Tutorial Services program and his participation in the activities of the Extended Campus should form the basis for the awarding of merit.

10. *Will there be opportunities for employment beyond the 4-year period?*
The Governing Authority cannot guarantee employment beyond the duration of the pilot study. Accordingly, the contracts between the university and its employees will not extend beyond this period.

Nonetheless, the Authority is optimistic that college planning will move into the third phase following the completion date of the project (September 1977). This will certainly occur if university enrolments at the University of Alberta begin to escalate within the next two or three years.

The possibility of attracting older students is strong. The flexibility attained through such features as self-instruction, tutorial services and year round operation should create new markets for university services.

No assurance can be given for employment beyond 1977. However, the Governing Authority is optimistic that the pilot study will demonstrate the effectiveness of the Athabasca University model to meet individual and social needs for the eighties. If it does so, the University will continue as a necessary addition to the institutional members of the province's post-secondary system.

11. *What advantages to my career might derive from participation in this study?*
Extensive revisions are taking place even now in Higher Education. What form Higher Education will have four or five years from now cannot be forecast. Certain facts can be taken into account. New jobs are being created at an unprecedented rate and often job descriptions are out of date before the jobs are filled. Job turnover is also occurring at an unprecedented pace and an individual advancing through a serial career is one of a new breed sought after because of his critical judgment, lateral thinking and adaptability developed in new environments, situations and relationships. Academics are well aware of the impact of change on their community. Perhaps one advantage can be forecast. The Pilot Project offers four years of security while you prepare for the uncertainty of future education.

The central emphasis in the Athabasca University model is on the communication process which involves not only mediated information but also the university in relationship to its constituency and communication among faculty members and students.

One of the fields of study is to be the interdisciplinary area of communications. Anyone who has read the September 1972 copy of the *Scientific American* will be impressed with the developments occurring within the field and with its increasing significance. The disciplines involved are many and varied.

Experience with the communication process will help you to understand and critically appraise the nature of society during the remaining decades of this century.

12. *Are there other conditions of employment?*
Beyond the various conditions of employment expressed and implied in the preceding questions, applicants should be fully aware of the absolute necessity of working with the various forms of communications media. Faculty members must be prepared to undergo a period of orientation and be prepared to work within teams having both academic competence and technical facility represented in balanced proportions for the purpose of promoting learning.

13. *How can I keep in touch with new developments in my discipline?*
The Governing Authority recognizes that the heavy responsibilities placed on faculty members will not allow individuals to keep as fully informed of developments in their disciplines as may be desirable. Therefore, the Authority recognizes the necessity of offering periodic short leaves of absences to individual faculty members which they may choose to spend at discipline oriented universities for the purpose of keeping pace with developments in their areas of specialty.●

The Bases of Instruction

The instructional program of the university will encompass those disciplines customarily found in the arts, science, and education faculties. These will be organized to emphasize their application and to provide for inter-disciplinary approaches.

Four fields of study constitute the scope of the instructional program. Generally, the various disciplines will be grouped under one of these fields of study. However, a program within a particular field may draw on a discipline or disciplines usually considered to lie within another field.

The fields of study establish areas of interest within which students may plan individual educational programs. They do more than this however. They provide structures for the categorization of disciplines and for their concentration around significant problems of study. They set para-meters for programs of project- or mission-oriented research. They could, simply by their nature, indicate the research emphasis.

Since the fields of study provide dimensions for organization, they must be comprehensive Since they give direction to learning and research, they must be relevant to life during the next three decades.

Four fields of study are proposed: Humanities, Communications, Human Community, and The Physical Environment. A fifth field, Specific Studies, is reserved for the fourth year, its purpose to achieve the vocational commitments of the university.

The Humanities

The study of man is central to any relevant instructional program, particularly so to a search for new relationships between man and the technetronic society he is creating.

The predominant value system tends to reflect man's faith, or lack of it, in his institutions. In periods of stability, values are taken for granted. They are implicit in the expressed views and actions of most people. Norms of behavior are clearly established and people cling to them tenaciously.

In periods of rapid, almost revolutionary, change, this is not so. All forms of authority are challenged. Some individuals would destroy all established authority sources, hoping to build new value systems on the wreckage of the old.

The question of appropriate values for a technetronic society must be considered. This should be one of the major challenges for universities during the next three decades.

The development of a life style and a consistent moral code has always been a phase in maturing. During periods of stability, institutions such as the family, the school, the church and the community provide acceptable models. In periods of change, however, these sources may become less influential.

Consequently, men and women today face exceedingly difficult tasks in searching for answers to these fundamental and ever recurring questions: Who am I? What are my life purposes? What do I consider to be most worth? How do I fulfill my basic needs? What sort of person do I wish to become?

The university must of necessity provide challenges for the mind. If, however, it does not help students find answers to questions, it fails in a basic commitment. Education must be both moral and intellectual.

It rests with those disciplines most directly concerned with the study of man to serve as the heart of the university.

These are the humanities.

Communication

To divide man's actions into categories is difficult and frequently misleading. Such divisions suggest that he performs in distinct spheres, that there is a diversity among his activities permitting classification and differentiation.

This, of course, is not true. Man feels, thinks, and speaks. He lives within himself and with others. But thinking, feeling and speaking are part of the whole which includes man and his fellow men, man and his social institutions, man and his natural surroundings.

Throughout history man has developed his arts of communication. He has learned to express how he feels and what he thinks in diverse forms. Several milleniums separate the speech and art of the cave man from the sophisticated technology of messages from the moon. Yet, these are expressions of the same basic human need, the irresistible drive to communicate with one's fellows.

Despite the interrelatedness of man's activities, there exists a clearly defined field of study deriving from this need to communicate. A wide range of disciplines from linguistics through the various art forms to computer technology may be subsumed under communications. Of all fields of study, it is perhaps the most interdisciplinary.

Problems and issues abound in the field. Through technology man has overcome the limitations of time; he is rapidly reducing the limitations of space; he is entering an era of instant communication.

This does not, however, eliminate problems in communicating. Technical proficiency has enhanced the speed and range of communication. It does not necessarily assure an understanding of the message. Effective communication between persons or groups of persons assumes that if they do not agree, they at least understand. It may mean, as well, an emotional identification with the message.

This reinforces the view that communication is emotional as well as intellectual, that it involves both thinking and feeling. It also suggests that communication does not travel a one-way street. Communication is "between"; it is action and reaction. It is a meeting not only of minds but of hearts.

Once this is accepted the field of study is enlarged. While language both spoken and written may be the major vehicle for communicating ideas, man has found many ways of expressing his emotions.

Perhaps those disciplines contributing to an understanding of the nature of man are as relevant in the exploration of this field as those enhancing its technology.

Of all problems facing man in the next three decades, those of communication may be among the most significant.

Human Community

This field of study will provide man with the most complex of problems throughout the next three decades.

There are few people or activities untouched by organization. To institutionalize is a human imperative equally as strong as the drive to communicate. Whether it be the family, the church, the school, or the community, man belongs to at least one of these formative institutions.

During his work years he belongs to trade unions or professional associations and he labors in business, industrial or government organizations that are becoming formidably complex.

So pervasive is organization in human society that one tends to see reality existing not so much in man as in the institutions he has created. Where does one seek truth, within the self or within the network of social structures with which man is surrounded?

We have said that a university must be concerned with the discovery of the "self in society". Whether we control our social institutions or are their creatures, may never be fully resolved. That we must understand them is, nonetheless, self-evident.

Few institutions today are not under fire. Those that have traditionally provided codes governing conduct are receiving unprecedented criticism. So pervasive is this challenging mood that one suspects (and perhaps fears) a creeping skepticism towards the values inherent in the cultural base from which these institutions are derived.

In exploring such problems we should distinguish between authority and the exercise of power. They are frequently confused.

No society can exist without its authority sources. The acceptance of authority is the cement which keeps society's structures intact. To destroy the sources from which authority flows will lead to the destruction of society in its present form.

One can readily identify the authority sources of our society. The family, the church, the community government come immediately to mind. The professions, scholarship, science, genius are equally significant sources.

The predominating source resides in the value system underlying our western civilization with its Judeo-Christian traditions and its ethics of productivity.

Power is exercised to maintain an authority towards which people express increasing skepticism. A police state is necessary when its citizenry has lost faith in the validity of government. Bureaucratic regulation increases as individual or corporate behavior ceases to conform with stated objectives.

Threats are not necessary in organizations which communicate effectively with their membership.

During the next three decades a major commitment of the university resides in the study of social institutions. New forms of human groupings and different organizational tactics will need to be created for the technotronic society. The problems of social organization require both research and development and the insight deriving from interdisciplinary study.

Subsumed under this field of study, Human Community, are the disciplines frequently referred to as the social sciences. While these constitute the core of the field, they are not the only disciplines contributing to an understanding of community. Undoubtedly, disciplines from other fields of study will provide fruitful information.

Physical Environment

The fourth field of study involves those disciplines broadly defined as the natural and physical sciences.

In a university emphasizing the study of man in relation to this environment, the role of these disciplines requires special definition. Do they occupy the pre-eminent position granted them on most university campuses or are they to be supportive of the major theme?

The central positions of the natural and physical sciences have their origins in the preoccupations of renaissance man. The applications of science provided the intellectual base supporting economic man, the prototype of our industrial culture.

Medieval man was inward looking. For him reality existed in salvation with its authoritative sources dependent on revelation. Truth derived from the relationship of mankind with God.

Renaissance man looked outward in his search for reality. Truth lay outside man to be discovered in his natural and physical environment. It resided in the laws of nature, a much more fruitful expression of divinity than the spoken or written word. Research replaced revelation as a vehicle of authority.

Economic man found his ultimate truth in the applications of science. Perhaps the most significant of his inventions was that of invention itself. The employment of knowledge to control the environment is the major achievement of the modern era. With this new technology, economic man created the industrial society.

We may now be entering the period when economic man will give way to technological man.

Technological man will face many problems. Among the most serious is that of coming to terms with the technology he has inherited. The post-industrial society holds the promise for those who can achieve it, of almost unlimited productivity. Machines are now, not only extending the power of man, but also duplicating his skills. The marriage of the skills of the machine to its strengths creates infinitely powerful agents for the production of wealth. That formidable index of growth—the Gross National Product—seems "hell-bent" for infinity.

The outlines of what may occur in this drive for material achievement are becoming more sharply etched. Evidences of ecological imbalance grow increasingly obvious. The simple pleasures of fishing in pure streams and viewing wild animals in their natural settings, pleasures hitherto so easily enjoyed, may be denied to all but a few. Material abundance could create a new kind of poverty.

The tools with which man has created abundance should serve him in controlling its effects. The disciplines of the physical and natural sciences have provided the theoretical base for the inventions of the technetronic society. They should provide equally effectively the knowledge necessary for social action to solve problems of ecological imbalance.

Technological man must find new applications for these disciplines which are derived from the intense intellectual curiosity of renaissance man. Man's search for truth about his environment has led to surprising consequences.

The "hard" science disciplines, as well as the "soft" sciences, must occupy an important role among the programs of an undergraduate university. That role, however, may be unique in the university that makes the study of man central to its educational design.

Conceivably these disciplines may be viewed as variants of the humanities. They are the products of man's intellect reacting to his

natural and physical environment. One cannot accept this knowledge as existing outside man himself. These disciplines were not discovered as much as created by the intellectual perceptions and organizing talents of man.

Rather than setting the sciences apart, we should view these disciplines as the intellectual creations of man reacting to his environment. As such, they occupy no higher or lower status among his achievements than those disciplines that seek to express his humanity in different forms.

The social implications of scientific development must also be considered. Studies in human ecology are beginning to do this. But what about atomic bombs and other forces of destruction? Scientists are becoming more and more disillusioned with the use of creativity for such purposes.

Man must increasingly see all around his field of specialization.

Resources for the study of the physical and natural sciences must be available within the university; the methods of providing these resources should be consistent with the objectives of the university.

The Field of Specific Studies

There should exist in Athabasca University two terminal points in the four year sequence. The first comes at the end of three years at which point the student may elect to take his degree. His work up until that time will have been within one or more of the four fields of study—or even all of them.

Throughout those three years the student will have followed programs chosen with the assistance of counsellors or staff members. His electives may represent the equivalent of a degree granted by the more traditional institution. On the other hand, his selection of disciplines might have been unique in its grouping and in its interdisciplinary approaches. Further, during his three years, the student might have become involved in directed study pursued far from the home campus.

While the first three years might be quite general, the fourth, if it is to be undertaken, should be quite specific in objective.

A student might, for instance, have pursued studies in the Human Community. If his record lacks evidence of either substance or achievement, he may need to undertake specific courses of study in order to qualify for entrance to a graduate school at a particular university. It is a filling in of any gaps.

The fourth year should provide, as well, for the specifics of professional study. By pursuing programs in one or more of the fields during the first three years, the student should have succeeded in establishing a knowledge base from which to nurture the skills of professional practice.

A major objective in the Athabasca design is to decrease if not eliminate distinctions between the liberal and vocational or the general and the specific.

To illustrate: A student early in his program at Athabasca may have decided to complete the fourth year in the specific study of either education or social service (or perhaps a combination of the two professional fields). His study and research throughout the first three years would reside in the disciplines of the Human Community. His purpose would have been to enlarge his knowledge of, and experience with, social organizations, institutions, and other types of social groupings.

He would do this through the study of relevant disciplines and through such formal interdisciplinary programs as may have been developed.

More particularly he might do this by on-the-spot observations of organizations in action. He might participate in project-oriented research currently underway. This might range from field experience in native communities to an examination of the life styles of residents in high rise apartments.

Since a major commitment of education for the next three decades is to discover groupings more appropriate to the needs of technological man, the activities undertaken would encompass reading, discussion, travel, research, apprenticeship to a scholar, membership on an analytical team, and, no doubt, individual meditation. The student should have experienced all of these irrespective of whether he proposes to have a career in education, social service, town planning, recreation leadership, counselling, law, medicine or business management.

Any means of livelihood having to do with

people presupposes an understanding of, and an identification with, the discovery of "self in society".

The student will not necessarily limit his exploration to one field of interest. Communications has much to offer any practitioner of the people-related professions. How man communicates with other men is basic to most occupations. How he achieves mastery over language has universal significance.

The electronic media of communication are becoming so central to our culture that both teachers and social service workers will require more than passing knowledge about them.

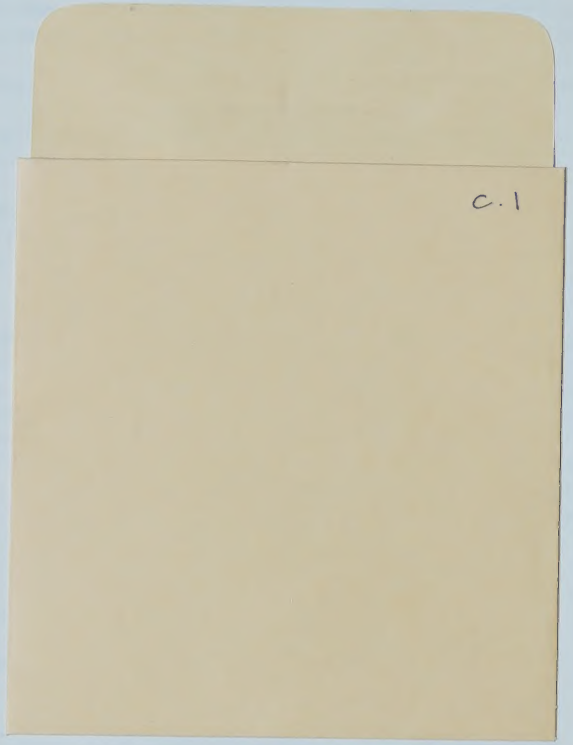
These ideas sketch in broad outline possibilities for decreasing distinctions between the liberal and the vocational. They indicate how programs within one or more of the fields of study while contributing to the general understanding of social problems are basic to the practice of several professions.

The fourth year of the sequence leading to the BA (Special) is designed for the acquisition of the specific knowledge and skills essential for certification. Whether the certificate is one for the practice of teaching or of social work, a practicum is imperative. At least half of the final year (perhaps one semester) should be spent in field experience, the other half in theory directly related to practice.

This practical experience need not be confined to the fourth year.

The student who knows he wants a career in education should be able to shape his program accordingly from his first year. He should be able to become involved almost immediately in problems and research of an educational nature. Perhaps in his first years, he will work on real problems; in his final year, he should actually be working in the classroom for a significant portion of his time.

A wide range of occupations of a professional or near professional character come to mind immediately as possibilities for the fourth year. From the field of Communications, several can be posed. The electronic media are fruitful sources of occupational opportunities. Closer relationship of the language of mathematics to the science of linguistics may be explored to provide the theoretical base for a sophisicated communications technology.●



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